

## **Joint Standards Committee**

**To:**

Cllrs Fisher, Kent, Pavlovic, Runciman and Steward  
(CYC Members)

Cllrs Chambers, Geogheghan-Breen and Waudby  
(Parish Council Members)

Mr J Leigh and Ms R Mazza (Independent Persons)

**Date:** Tuesday, 8 July 2025

**Time:** 4.00 pm

**Venue:** West Offices, Station Rise, York

## **AGENDA**

- 1. Appointment of Chair**  
To appoint a Chair of the Joint Standards Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.
- 2. Appointment of Vice-Chair**  
To appoint a Vice-Chair of the Joint Standards Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.
- 3. Apologies for Absence**  
To receive and note apologies for absence.

#### **4. Declarations of Interest**

(Pages 7 - 8)

At this point in the meeting, Members and co-opted members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest, or other registerable interest, they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

[Please see the attached sheet for further guidance for Members.]

#### **5. Exclusion of Press and Public**

To consider the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting during consideration of exempt Annexes A(ii) and B (ii) to Agenda Item 10 (Monitoring report in Respect of Complaints Received) on the grounds that it contains information which is likely to reveal the identity of individuals.

This information is classed as exempt under paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as revised by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

#### **6. Minutes**

(Pages 9 - 12)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Standards Committee held on 13 May 2025.

#### **7. Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee.

**Please note that our registration deadlines are set as 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at our meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is 5:00pm on Friday 4 July 2025.**

To register to speak please visit [www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings](http://www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings) to fill in an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting, please contact Democratic Services. Contact details can be found at the foot of this agenda.

## **Webcasting of Public Meetings**

Please note that, subject to available resources, this meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The meeting can be viewed live and on demand at [www.york.gov.uk/webcasts](http://www.york.gov.uk/webcasts).

### **8. Review of Work Plan (Pages 13 - 14)**

To consider the Committee's work plan for the current year and decide whether any amendments or additions are required.

### **9. Urgent Business**

Any other business which the Chair decides is urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

### **10. Monitoring Report on Complaints Received (Pages 15 - 30)**

To receive a routine update report on recent standards complaints.

Democracy Officer:

Jane Meller

Contact Details:

Telephone: (01904) 555209

Email: [jane.meller@york.gov.uk](mailto:jane.meller@york.gov.uk)

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

Contact details are set out above.

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**We can also translate into the following languages:**

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

### Declarations of Interest – guidance for Members

- (1) Members must consider their interests, and act according to the following:

Type of Interest	You must
Disclosable Pecuniary Interests	Disclose the interest, not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.
Other Registrable Interests (Directly Related) <b>OR</b> Non-Registrable Interests (Directly Related)	Disclose the interest; speak on the item <u>only if</u> the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.
Other Registrable Interests (Affects) <b>OR</b> Non-Registrable Interests (Affects)	Disclose the interest; remain in the meeting, participate and vote <u>unless</u> the matter affects the financial interest or well-being: (a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interest or well-being of a majority of inhabitants of the affected ward; and (b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest. In which case, speak on the item <u>only if</u> the public are also allowed to speak, but otherwise do not participate in the discussion or vote, and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.

- (2) Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.
- (3) Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations,

and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

City of York Council

Minutes

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Meeting	Joint Standards Committee
Date	13 May 2025
Present	Councillors Fisher, Pavlovic, Runciman, Kent and Geogheghan-Breen (Parish Council Member)
Officers Present	Lindsay Tomlinson, Head of Democratic Governance Guy Close, Democratic Services Manager

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**41. Apologies for Absence**

Due to the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Members voted for Cllr Runciman to Chair the meeting, with Parish Cllr Geogheghan-Breen to act as Vice-Chair.

Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Rowley BEM, Parish Cllrs Waudby and Chambers, Mr J Leigh and Ms R Mazza (Independent Persons).

**42. Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial interests or disclosable pecuniary interests which they might have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

**43. Exclusion of Press and Public**

Resolved: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the exempt versions of Annexes A (ii) and B (ii) to Agenda Item 10 (Monitoring Report in Respect of Complaints Received), on the grounds that they contain information likely to reveal the identity of individuals, which is classed as exempt under Paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**44. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Standards Committee held on 18 March 2025 be approved as a correct record.

**45. Minutes of Sub-Committees**

Resolved: That the minutes of the following sub-committee meetings be approved as a correct record:

- Joint Standards Assessment Sub-Committee, 11 April 2025

**46. Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

**47. Member Training and Development**

Members considered the proposal to establish a working group to develop and implement the member induction and training programme, regularly reviewing as appropriate.

All Members were supportive of the proposal and agreed the terms of reference at Annex A to the report. They also agreed that the working group should comprise of seven members, two Labour, two Liberal Democrats, one Conservative/Independent and two Parish Councillors.

Resolved:

- a) That the establishment of a cross-party working group, comprising of seven members, as set out above with a remit to
  - i. develop, implement and review member induction and training.
  - ii. Act as the liaison group for Operation Ford, undertaking joint working with North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Council Members.
- b) That the terms of reference set out in Annex A to the report be approved.

Reason: To ensure that members have access to appropriate training and that member safety and security is addressed with relevant partners.

**48. Review of Work Plan**

Members considered the committee's work plan for the current municipal year.

Resolved: That the work plan be approved.

Reason: To ensure that the committee has a planned programme of work in place.

**49. Monitoring Report on Complaints Received**

Members considered a report which provided an update on current business as regards complaints.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the committee is aware of current levels of activity.

Cllr C Runciman, Chair

The meeting started at 4.04 pm and finished at 4.36 pm.

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## Work Plan for Joint Standards Committee 2025/26

<b>Meeting Date</b> (4.00pm start time)	<b>Items</b>	<b>Notes</b>
8 July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring report in respect of complaints received.</li><li>• Review of Work Plan</li></ul>	Standard Item
16 September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring report in respect of complaints received.</li><li>• Review of Work Plan</li></ul>	Standard Item
11 November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring report in respect of complaints received.</li><li>• Review of Work Plan</li></ul>	Standard Item
22 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring report in respect of complaints received.</li><li>• Review of Work Plan</li></ul>	Standard Item
17 March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring report in respect of complaints received.</li><li>• Review of Work Plan</li></ul>	Standard Item

Pending items for consideration:

- Member Training and Development
- Review of Citywide Democratic Engagement of Parished and Non Parished areas
- Case Handling Procedures
- Local Government Standards Framework Update
- Parish Council Liaison



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**Joint Standards Committee****8 July 2025**

Report of the Deputy Monitoring Officer

**Monitoring Report in respect of Complaints Received****Summary**

1. This report is to update the Committee on the position regarding ongoing and recently closed complaints.

**Background**

2. The Joint Standards Committee is responsible for promoting a culture of openness, accountability, probity and the maintenance of high standards of conduct by members. In order to do this, it reviews all code of conduct complaints. This enables, amongst other things:
  - Monitoring overall numbers of complaints allowing comparison with similar authorities
  - Monitoring trends of increasing/decreasing levels of complaints and identifying links to key events or triggers
  - Identifying common types of complaints which may illustrate a need for enhanced training and information
  - Assessing the efficacy of sanctions imposed by linking an increase/decrease in complaints regarding a particular member or from a particular locus to intervention or sanctions previously imposed.
  - Assessing the efficacy of the complaints procedure and identifying possible improvements.

**Commentary on Case Logs****Open cases**

3. There are currently no open cases.

### **Cases closed since last JSC**

4. Case reference 2024/18 – formal resolution proposed. A letter of advice will be sent to the Councillor and training will be provided for all Members on the appropriate and safe use of social media. Letter of advice sent.
5. Case reference 2024/19 - this matter is outside of the scope of the code of conduct. The dialogue that took place is not related to the subject member's role as a Parish Councillor therefore the matter therefore does not pass the initial filter.
6. Case reference 2024/20 - this complaint fell under paragraph 5 of the complaints handling process and was referred to a JSC Sub Committee for assessment. The sub-committee determined the matter should be resolved informally by way of provision of training for all members on the appropriate use of email accounts.
7. Case reference 2025/02 - this complaint fell under paragraph 5 of the complaints handling process and was referred to a JSC Sub Committee for assessment. The sub-committee determined the complaint would not constitute a breach of the code of conduct. No further action to be taken.
8. Case reference 2025/03 - the complaint can be categorised as a "tit for tat" complaint in response to previous complaints that have already gone through the formal process. Therefore, no further action should be taken as it would not be in the public interest, or in the interest of the parish council, to revisit the complaints that have been resolved.
9. Case reference 2025/04 - the complaint can be categorised as a "tit for tat" complaint in response to previous complaints that have already gone through the formal process. Therefore, no further action should be taken as it would not be in the public interest, or in the interest of the parish council, to revisit the complaints that have been resolved.

### **Implications**

#### **Financial**

10. Not applicable to this report.

#### **Human Resources (HR)**

11. Not applicable to this report.

## Equalities

12. Maintaining standards across the City through the Code of Conduct ensures that an ethical framework can be adhered to, including ensuring that equality issues form an integral part of that framework.

## Legal

13. As detailed within the report.

## Crime and Disorder, Information Technology and Property

14. Not applicable to this report.

## Recommendations

15. That the Joint Standards Committee notes the report.  
Reason: To ensure that the Committee is aware of the current levels of activity and to provide oversight of the complaints' procedure.

## Author & Officer Responsible for the report:

Cathryn Moore  
Deputy Monitoring Officer  
cathryn.moore@york.gov.uk

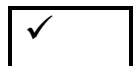
Report  
Approved



Date 30 June 2025

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

## Background Papers:

- Annex A (i) - Table showing open complaints received.
- Annex A (ii) - Table showing open complaints received (confidential)

- Annex B (i) - Table showing recently closed complaints.
- Annex B (ii) - Table showing recent complaints (confidential)

**Open Complaints Log - Public**

<b>Case ref</b>	<b>City or Parish</b>	<b>Complainant</b>	<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Nature of Complaint</b>	<b>Status / updates</b>
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By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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## Annex B (i)

### Recently Closed Complaints Log - Public

Case ref	City or Parish	Complainant	Date Received	Nature of Complaint	Status / updates
2024/18 (LT)	CYC	York resident	24/03/25	The complainant alleges that the Councillor acted in an unprofessional manner in relation to a comment on social media, and used insulting and abusive language in a public comment on social media.	<p>This complaint is currently being assessed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>Views of the IP received.</p> <p>The Deputy Monitoring Officer reached the conclusion that informal resolution should be sought. A letter of advice will be sent to the Councillor to remind them that the behaviours displayed on social media were not acceptable and all Elected Members need to be mindful of the behaviours they display in public, including on social media. Training will also be provided for all Members on the appropriate and safe use of social media. Parties notified, complaint closed.</p>
2024/19 (LT)	Parish	York resident	26/03/25	The complainant alleges that the Councillor used abusive and inappropriate language via text.	<p>This complaint is currently being assessed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>Views of the IP received.</p> <p>The Deputy Monitoring Officer reached the conclusion that this matter is outside of the scope of the code of conduct. This is because the dialogue that took place is not related to the subject member's role as a Parish Councillor. The matter therefore does not pass the initial filter and</p>

## Annex B (i)

### Recently Closed Complaints Log - Public

Case ref	City or Parish	Complainant	Date Received	Nature of Complaint	Status / updates
					no further action will be taken. Parties notified, complaint closed.
2024/20 (LT)	CYC	Parish	28/03/25	The complainant alleges that the Councillor misused their '.gov.uk' email address. The complainant also alleges that the Councillor displayed coercive behaviour via email.	<p>This complaint is currently being assessed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>Views of the IP received.</p> <p>This complaint falls under paragraph 5 of the complaints handling process. It will therefore be referred to a JSC Sub Committee for assessment.</p> <p>The sub-committee's decision was to resolve the matter informally by way of provision of training for all members on the appropriate use of email accounts. Parties notified, complaint closed.</p>
2025/02 (LT)	CYC	Parish	16/04/25	The complainant alleges that the Councillor shared a leaflet that was not a balanced or truthful representation of the facts. The complainant alleges this breaches the following aspects of the Code of Conduct: 3.1 Impartiality and 5.1 Disrepute.	<p>This complaint is currently being assessed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>Views of the IP received.</p> <p>This complaint falls under paragraph 5 of the complaints handling process. It will therefore be referred to a JSC Sub Committee for assessment.</p>

## Annex B (i)

### Recently Closed Complaints Log - Public

Case ref	City or Parish	Complainant	Date Received	Nature of Complaint	Status / updates
					The Assessment sub-committee concluded that the complaint would not constitute a breach of the code of conduct. No further action to be taken. Parties notified, complaint closed.
2025/03 (LT)	Parish	York Resident	08/05/25	The complainant alleges that the Councillor breached points 3.3 and 3.7 of the code of conduct in an email they claimed was sent on behalf of the Parish Council.	<p>This complaint is currently being assessed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>Views of the IP sought. The Deputy Monitoring Officer has reached the conclusion that the complaint can be categorised as a “tit for tat” complaint (paragraph 10[d]) in response to the previous complaints that have already gone through the formal process. Therefore, no further action should be taken as it would not be in the public interest, or in the interest of the parish council, to revisit the complaints that have been resolved. Complaint closed, parties notified.</p>
2025/04 (LT)	Parish	CYC	29/04/25	The complainant alleges that the Councillor exhibited bullying and harassing behaviours, therefore breaching the code of conduct.	<p>This complaint is currently being assessed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>Views of the IP sought. The Deputy Monitoring Officer has reached the conclusion that the complaint can be categorised as a “tit for tat” complaint (paragraph 10[d]) in response to the previous complaints that have already gone</p>

## Annex B (i)

### Recently Closed Complaints Log - Public

Case ref	City or Parish	Complainant	Date Received	Nature of Complaint	Status / updates
					through the formal process. Therefore, no further action should be taken as it would not be in the public interest, or in the interest of the parish council, to revisit the complaints that have been resolved. Complaint closed, parties notified.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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